



NORTHEAST IDAHO

BONNEVILLE, BUTTE, CLARK, CUSTER, FREMONT, JEFFERSON, LEMHI, MADISON, & TETON COUNTIES

EMPLOYMENT TRENDS

The seasonally adjusted unemployment rate for the Bonneville Labor Market Area (LMA) increased two-tenths of a percentage point over the month to end at 3.8 percent for June as seen in Northeast Table 1. All four counties in the LMA showed a slight increase over the month with the exception of Butte County that decreased 1.2 percentage points. The change in Butte County was the result of a decrease in the number of unemployed people by 20. Year-over-year, the Bonneville LMA's unemployment rate increased three-tenths of a percentage point, Bingham and Jefferson Counties showed increases, Butte County showed a decrease, and Bonneville County remained steady. Bonneville and Butte Counties recorded the lowest rates in the LMA, tied at 3.3 percent. Idaho Falls, the largest city in the LMA, remained unchanged at 3.3 percent month-over-month and year-over-year. The LMA's rate was 1.7 percentage points lower than the state's rate of 5.0 percent and 2.3 percentage points lower than the national rate of 5.6 percent.

Of the other six counties in Northeast Idaho, Fremont County showed the largest monthly increase at six-tenths of a percentage point to 6.3 percent. Teton County showed the largest decrease at five-tenths of a percentage point to 3.3 percent. Madison County had the lowest rate in the state in June at 1.5 percent. Year-over-year, Clark County showed the largest increase—1.4 percentage points to 5.9 percent—while Custer, Lemhi, and Fremont Counties were close behind. Teton County only increased two-tenths of a percentage point. Madison County was the only county to experience a loss, a decrease of only one-tenth of a percentage point.

Nonfarm Payroll Jobs increased by 1,040 jobs from May to June for a total of 68,730. Of that increase, *Construction* added the most (450 jobs) while *Government Administration* and *Leisure & Hospitality* added 340 and 240 jobs, respectively. *Government Education* (-120 jobs) and *Professional & Business Services* (-130 jobs) showed the only losses. While *Government Education* losses would be expected from May to June with summer vacation beginning, jobs losses in *Professional & Business Services* seems a little

Northeast Idaho Table 1: Labor Force & Employment
Bonneville, Bingham, Butte, and Jefferson Counties

	Jun 2004*	May 2004	Jun 2003	% Change From	
				Last Month	Last Year
INDIVIDUALS BY PLACE OF RESIDENCE					
<i>Seasonally Adjusted</i>					
Civilian Labor Force	88,110	87,680	82,690	0.5	6.6
Unemployment	3,310	3,120	2,930	6.1	13.0
% of Labor Force Unemployed	3.8	3.6	3.5		
Total Employment	84,810	84,570	79,760	0.3	6.3
<i>Unadjusted</i>					
Civilian Labor Force	89,730	87,700	84,220	2.3	6.5
Unemployment	2,830	2,580	2,520	9.7	12.3
% of Labor Force Unemployed	3.2	2.9	3.0		
Total Employment	86,900	85,120	81,710	2.1	6.4
JOB BY PLACE OF WORK					
Nonfarm Payroll Jobs** - NAICS	68,730	67,690	66,170	1.5	3.9
<i>Goods-Producing Industries</i>	10,950	10,410	10,360	5.2	5.7
Natural Resources & Mining	70	70	70	0.0	0.0
Construction	5,940	5,490	4,850	8.2	22.5
Manufacturing	4,940	4,850	5,440	1.9	-9.2
Food Manufacturing	2,820	2,790	3,060	1.1	-7.8
Fabricated Metal Product Manufacturing	280	280	270	0.0	3.7
Machinery Manufacturing	420	400	440	5.0	-4.5
Other Manufacturing	1,420	1,380	1,670	2.9	-15.0
<i>Service-Providing Industries</i>	57,780	57,280	55,810	0.9	3.5
Trade, Transportation & Utilities	15,820	15,680	14,990	0.9	5.5
Wholesale Trade	5,400	5,370	5,110	0.6	5.7
Retail Trade	8,490	8,440	8,100	0.6	4.8
Utilities	120	120	120	0.0	0.0
Transportation	1,810	1,750	1,660	3.4	9.0
Information	1,120	1,100	990	1.8	13.1
Financial Activities	2,230	2,220	2,200	0.5	1.4
Professional & Business Services	12,210	12,340	12,080	-1.1	1.1
Educational & Health Services	6,860	6,850	6,490	0.1	5.7
Leisure & Hospitality	5,640	5,400	5,370	4.4	5.0
Other Services	2,040	2,040	2,270	0.0	-10.1
Government Education	5,030	5,150	5,080	-2.3	-1.0
Government Administration	6,830	6,490	6,340	5.2	7.7

*Preliminary Estimate

**Full- or part-time jobs of people who worked for or received wages in the pay period including the 12th of the month

out of season. However, the decreases were mostly noted in the *Scientific Research & Development Services* and *Administrative & Support & Waste* sectors. Both sectors have been undergoing changes for some time, including layoffs. The Idaho National Engineering & Environmental Laboratory (INEEL) is expected to make some changes in its overall mission, which will affect INEEL's main contractor and subcontractors along with private subcontractors throughout the area.

Year-over-year, *Nonfarm Payroll Jobs* increased by 2,560 with main contributors being *Construction* (1,090 jobs), *Retail Trade* and *Wholesale Trade* combined (680 jobs), *Government Administration* (490 jobs), and *Educational & Health Services* (370 jobs). The Wells Fargo Construction Report shows cumulative yearly totals at 128 more permits for new dwelling units in Eastern Idaho compared to the same four months in 2003. (January through April is the most recent report-

ing period.) Total dollar values for permits submitted for the same time period exceeded 2003 totals by over \$7.3 million. Most of the construction project dollars (\$8.5 million) show up in Idaho Falls' commercial (new nonresidential) permits as a new Lowe's was built and the new Wal-Mart Supercenter on the west side of Idaho Falls applied for its permit during this time frame. Bonneville County (including all but Ammon and Idaho Falls) showed a large increase, \$7.5 million, in new residential construction while Ammon increased \$5 million and Idaho Falls increased \$3 million. As noted, the total comes to well over the \$7.3 million dollar mark increase. That's because there were also large decreases: Rexburg new residential construction and Rexburg new nonresidential construction combined decreased \$9.5 million and Lemhi County, not including Salmon, decreased \$1 million. While construction jobs are still ongoing in Rexburg, the majority of the permits were issued in 2002 and 2003. Salmon also finished its business incubator last year along with a few other projects. Although the Wells Fargo report is an indicator of construction activity, keep in mind that permits and construction dollars are reported in the month and year permits are acquired, yet the project itself can be ongoing for some time. Larger year-over-year losses were noted in *Manufacturing—Food and Other* sectors (500 jobs), and *Other Services* (230 jobs). Other *Manufacturing* includes the *Computer & Electronic Manufacturing* sector, which is still recovering from the national slump.

AREA DEVELOPMENTS

Bonneville County

- GMAC Mortgage Company opened its first Idaho Falls office at 1302 East Seventeenth Street. Elaine Moore, who previously worked for U.S. Bank, was named as the branch manager/associate district manager.
- Greyhound Lines, Inc. cut bus routes throughout the state, including the Idaho Falls routes. Along with other routes, Greyhound cut a popular twice-daily route between Salt Lake City and Butte, Montana, which also stopped in Idaho Falls. Rimrock Trailways, which previously coordinated services with Greyhound in the local area, will try to maintain the routes as best it can. Rexburg and Dubois routes have also been cut. The company cited better customer service, simpler networks, and better efficiency as reasons for the cuts and added that there will be more cuts to come. Traditionally used by the long-distance traveler, the company is seeing increasingly more customers using services for shorter distances (within a 450 mile range). Therefore, it is trying to streamline to accommodate customer demands and change with the market. Other cuts of the 260 towns in the western United States took place in Montana, Utah, and Wyoming.
- The American Red Cross opened a new Blood Services Center in Idaho Falls at the end of July. Now located at 1165 East Seventeenth Street, the center has already received enough positive feedback to let the agency know the move was worth the \$250,000 investment. The move allowed the center to keep services on one

level. The previous location had a second floor and donors had to walk up and down the stairs. The move also gives the agency more visibility now that it is located on the busiest street in Idaho Falls. Just in the first week, the center doubled its daily donors. Next year, the center plans to add stations for the collection of platelets, a needed substance for many cancer victims. As noted in the *Post Register*, donor services supervisor Terri Therp stated, "Eastern Idaho gives more blood per person than anywhere else in the state."

Butte County

- Mackay was awarded a grant for \$30,000 from the Idaho Department of Health and Welfare, through the Rural Health Care Access program for 2004, to supplement the dental services of Dr. Tad Hancock of Pocatello. Dr. Hancock has been servicing the Mackay area for the past three years and has approximately 800 clients in the area. The money will help maintain his Mackay office and help supplement his costs for the commute.

Madison County

- Winger's Diner broke ground in Rexburg at the end of July. The restaurant is owned by franchisee Dan Pluid of Highland, Utah, and will become the sixth Winger's in the state. The plans show 3,600-square feet (larger than other Winger's), which will seat 160 to 170 customers. The store expects to hire 70 to 75 employees in mid-September and plans to open in October.

Teton County

- Driggs recently finished up the first SpudFest, a family-oriented film and music festival at and around the Spud Drive-In. Reports on the outcome of the first-time festival were encouraging as the festival grew throughout the first full week of August. Filmmakers and bands from throughout the United States attended. Actress Dawn Wells, who played the character MaryAnn in the 1960s television series, *Gilligan's Island*, is helping back and support the festival.
- The Teton Valley Hospital and Surgicenter in Driggs was awarded a \$15,000 grant from the Idaho Department of Health and Welfare's Rural Health Care Access program for 2004. Much of the money will be used to hire medical translators to assist Spanish-speaking community members. The center is partnering with El Puente of Jackson, Wyoming, for the services. El Puente is seeking to hire local citizens for this work since 12 percent of the hospital's service area residents speak predominantly Spanish.

Tanya Albán, Regional Labor Economist
 150 Shoup Avenue, Idaho Falls, ID 83402
 (208) 557-2500, ext. 3587
 E-mail: talban@cl.idaho.gov